Enhance and sustain human performance

Vol. 30, No. 2 - Friday, Jan. 27, 2006 - Brooks City-Base, TX

for dominant air and space power

AFIOH epidemiology team earns first Director's Award

By Rudy Purificato 311th Human Systems Wing

Critically important public and envi-

ronmental health support of Hurricane Katrina disaster relief efforts has earned the Air Force Institute for Operational Health's Theater Epidemiology Team (TET) the base's highest honor.

Mr. Eric Stephens, 311th Human Systems Wing director, presented the Director's Award to the five-member TET Jan. 19 in a historic ceremony that recognized the organization's significant contributions made during our nation's worst natural disaster.

"It's an honor and we appreciate it, but we would not have received it if not for the collective efforts and support of a lot of people in AFIOH," said Capt. Michael Haines, a TET member and bioenvironmental engineer.

It's the first time that TET has been so recognized. However, it's the seventh time in the history of the award program that an AFIOH organization has earned the honor. Mr. Stephens's presentation of the award also marked another historic first in that it was the first time the honor has been bestowed as the Director's Award. It has been previously presented as the Commander's Award 88 times since its inception in January 1995. That changed last summer when



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brandy Bogart

Eric Stephens (right), director of the 311th Human Systems Wing, honors the Air Force Institute for Operational Health's Theater Epidemiology Team with the Director's Award. Maj. Renee Shibukawa-Kent holds a framed certificate and trophy, with Tech. Sgt James Smith, Col. James Neville, Tech. Sgt. Henry DeBose and Capt. Mike Haines.

Mr. Stephens became the 311th HSW's first civilian director.

TET members honored during the ceremony include AFIOH commander Col. James Neville, Maj. Renee Shibukawa-Kent, Tech. Sgts. James Smith and Henry Debose and Captain Haines. The latter said that it was the first time TET had been deployed.

"AFIOH has five TETs consisting of five members. They include a preventive medicine doctor, public health officer, bioenvironmental engineering officer, public health technician and bioenvironmental engineering technician," Captain Haines explained. The team deployed to the New Orleans International Airport for 21 days where they provided a host of

services ranging from disease surveillance to water sampling.

"We pulled (tested) a lot of water samples to ensure water quality and that it was safe," Captain Haines said, referring to the sanitary evaluations of 81 bulk water tankers from Louisiana's water treatment facilities. "We worked with the state health department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to ensure the process was sanitary," he said.

TET members also conducted health surveillance at local hospitals, performed food facility inspections and provided veterinary care to more than 120 pets. "Evacuees were coming through with their pets. Some of them abandoned their pets (there)," recalls Captain Haines, crediting TET member Major Shibukawa-Kent for helping save the lives of several animals including kittens.

While receiving the Director's Award is certainly an honor, TET members agree that their greatest reward is having helped people during the disaster relief effort.

"We all learned a lot about ourselves and human nature. We saw some pretty incredible people demonstrate the power of the human spirit. The deployment helped renew the spirit within us," Captain Haines said.

DoD delays start date for new personnel system

American Press Service

Defense officials have scaled back the initial group of civilian employees to fall under the new National Security Personnel System to 11,000 in the first group from a previously scheduled 60,000, officials announced Jan.

The implementation date was also changed from Feb. 1 to April 30.

The rest of the deployment schedule, including the schedule for Brooks, is being reviewed and adjusted, said Charles Shinn, Brooks NSPS implementation advisor.

Force Materiel Command that Brooks will remain in Sprial 1.2,

with the Human Resources portion planned to deploy in October,"

Mr. Shinn said. "The date for deployment of the Labor Relations portion is still unknown at this time."

With this schedule change, 311th Human Systems Wing Director Eric Stephens authorized an extension of the suspense date for completion of the

"We have confirmed with Air Change Management and Soft-Skills training for managers, supervisors, and employees. Mr.

> Stephens set basewide goal National Security comple-

tion by Feb. 17, 75 percent completion by March 3, and 100 percent completion by March 17.

The Change Management and Soft-Skills courses do not provide technical information about NSPS—their focus is on the development of communication and change management skills which will be needed to successfully implement NSPS, Mr. Shinn said. The courses are available online through the Air Force Portal.

"We recommend supervisors and employees set aside three to four hours to complete the courses to avoid interruptions," c e n t Mr. Shinn said. "Through these classes, supervisors and employees will enhance their ability to deal with change and develop skills in interpersonal communications. Supervisors will also improve their ability to coach and counsel employees, and elevate their ability to achieve results through performance and manage employee performance."

DoD personnel officials have been seeking feedback on proposed rules from employees, managers, human relations specialists and employee unions for several months. That feedback "led us to conclude we need more time to focus on simplifying the performance management design, getting performance objectives right, and ensuring the system is simple, clear, and understandable," NSPS officials said in a statement on the program's Web site.

The National Security Personnel System is intended to

See NSPS/Page 17

Youth **Programs** in need of participants

Page 4



Iris Seals logs four decades at Brooks

Page 14



SPORTS: Youth basketball league kicks off 'drug-free' season

Page 18









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Grooming Airmen for success

By Chief Master Sgt. James Erwin

407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, Ali Base, Iraq

What does taking care of your troops mean to you? Does it mean giving in to every want, concern or need?

To me, it means to give the troop everything he or she needs to be successful. After all, they are the Airmen who will replace today's leaders, and we owe it to them to make sure they are prepared. Troops need education, discipline, opportunities and role models.

Education is important to our young and upcoming Airmen. In some ways, they are already smarter than us. Don't believe me? Grab a young Airman and a VCR, IPOD and computer and find out who gets at least two out of three working first.

Our Airmen need mentors to be competent and confident in their duties and the lifestyle of the Air Force. The philosophy I have been brought up with is to get qualified and/or certified on your duties first and then knock out your career development courses. These simple actions make new Airmen a valuable member of the team — a member who can be relied on to complete any task or assignment they are given.

Challenge Airmen with the opportunity of off-duty education after they are duty-qualified and have proven themselves competent. This will not only benefit the Air Force but will make the Airmen more productive because they are doing something for themselves. With formal education, their thinking becomes clearer and their ability to communicate is enhanced, often times reducing the workload of the supervisor. I don't mean do the supervisor's work. Even if they make a career out of the Air Force, at some point they will need to close that chapter in their life and walk into the civilian world. What a great feeling it is to know you've helped them along the way.

Troops also need discipline. When most people hear the word discipline they immediately think of the old sergeant chewing out a troop or Airman Smith standing in front of the commander's desk receiving admin-

istrative action. Unfortunately, there are times when these things are necessary and these actions aren't taken lightly. These actions can often be avoided if supervisors are actively engaged with their troops and encourage conduct that warrants rewards instead of punishment.

The side of discipline that goes unnoticed is the reinforcement or reward side. It doesn't take a lot of time to give a deserving Airman a pat on the back, type a quick thank you note or letter of appreciation, or say thanks for a job well done in front of their peers and supervisors. Little things, such as these are money in the bank for the leader who recognizes the individual's efforts and sets a marvelous example for the Air Force.

As Airmen grow they need opportunities to enhance their skills. They need to be allowed to stumble, but not fall. Some experiences are best learned from failure and serve as a test of character. This is a fine line that supervisors need to monitor. Supervisors do not have to be right over the shoulder, but close enough to step in if things start to go off course or situations move too fast for the troop.

Experience is the best teacher; troops learn what to do and what not to do. Give them the opportunity to succeed. Even if they fail, they should have learned something that makes them a little smarter and little more prepared for the next time. No leader or supervisor has gotten where they are by being perfect.

Education, discipline and opportunities are all important, but to make sure Airmen understand the path, they need a map. They need role models. Often the role model is the immediate supervisor or trainer, but this is only the tip of the iceberg. Granted, supervisors may spend more time with the individual, but anyone who has more rank or time in the service automatically becomes a role model, and that's not always the best thing.

Positive role models are vital not only for the Air Force to complete its mission but to set the tone of what is expected from troops as they grow into the Air Force family. Supervisors and leaders need to set a positive example because the higher we move up the chain of command the more we are looked at.

Nutrition education aids in battle of bulge

By Kendahl Johnson

Discovery editor

Anyone that has ever fought the battle of the bulge knows the key to losing weight is what you eat. Simply, in order to shed pounds you must expend more calories than you consume. There are certainly other factors at play, like metabolism and genetics, but ultimately you need to eat fewer calories than you burn.

In an effort to get a better grip on my resolution of losing 70 pounds this year, I turned to the Brooks Health and Wellness Center as the ultimate resource. Specifically, I am tapping into the minds of Capt. Cynthia Pouncey, a certified dietitian and director of the HAWC, and Diana Gonzales, a registered nurse who heads the Civilian Health Population Service. They have been providing countless health and food tips to help me in my efforts.

Recently, the dynamic duo sponsored a field trip to HEB. More than 15 Brooks employees attended the tour and were provided insightful information on healthy shopping and eating. The field trip started with a 20minute information session and food label training.

"The most important element of a label is the serving size. Knowing the size of portions can help prevent a person from unknowingly consuming too many calories," said Captain Pouncey, debunking my own theories that fat grams, calories or even total carbs was the most important piece of information found on a food label. I learned not to get too excited when a product touts low calories – it might just be the serving size is super small.

The field trip yielded many other useful tips to aid me in my efforts to get skinny. One idea is to color code grocery store receipts. Using different colored markers, highlight whole grains, low-fat dairy, produce and fatty items. At a glance you'll able to determine if your diet is truly balanced or if you are purchasing too many snack foods and not enough veggies.

Captain Pouncey suggested trying new items to keep a diet from getting too monotonous or boring. "Keep it fresh," she said. "When I go shopping, I always try to buy something I have never had before."

Another suggestion from Captain Pouncey is to never completely "give up" something you enjoy. "Diet is a fourletter word. Don't get into the mentality of 'good foods' and 'bad foods.' You can eat whatever you want, just be aware of the portions."

I have taken the knowledge gleamed from Captain Pouncey and Ms. Gonzales and created an eating plan. The biggest change was to increase the servings of fruits and vegetables. The duo suggests eating 7-10 servings of fruits and vegetables daily. "Fruits and vegetables are low in calories, good sources of vitamins and minerals, and rich in dietary fiber," Captain Pouncey said. "Eating more fruits and vegetables also helps satisfy your hunger and may help you eat less high-fat foods."

In addition, I am limiting the intake of unhealthy fats. "You really want to avoid saturated fats, particularly animal fats, coconut oil and palm oil," Captain Pouncey said, adding that butter, cream and shortening should also be eliminated from a diet if possible.

I have also implemented Captain Pouncey's suggestion of eliminating refined flour and replacing it with whole grains. "Whole grains are good sources of fiber and other nutrients," she said. Giving up white bread, pasta and white rice has been difficult, but I am learning to enjoy the substitutions. (I recently discovered GG Bran Crispbread, a high dietary fiber food imported from Scandinavia. I use it mainly as an appetite control cracker and it's a perfect snack with a little cheese, tuna or egg salad.)

Overall, none of these lifestyle suggestions have been too difficult to implement. After three weeks of exercise and changing what I eat (and how much), I have lost 10 pounds. While most of it is likely water weight, I am starting to see a difference in how my clothes fit. I still have a long way to go, but it's very motivating to have a bit of immediate success.



AF Reserve offers options to force-shaping officers

By 1st Lt. Martha Petersante-Gioia 66th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

"One weekend a month, two weeks a year." Nearly everyone has heard this catch phrase repeated on television commercials over the years, but for those facing the Air Force's force shaping initiative, it may soon become a reality. Joining the Reserve is just one of many options open to those lieutenants affected by force shaping.

The first step for personnel interested in joining the Air Force Reserve is to schedule a meeting with a reserve recruiter. The Air Force Reserve offers a variety of opportunities, said Master Sgt. Wanda Murray, Hanscom Air Force Reserve recruiter. "The Reserve offers two types of programs: Unit and Individual Mobilization Augmentee," she said.

In order for military members to join, she said, they first must qualify. Materials needed include the last three Officer Performance Reports, a résumé, medical records and a physical fitness score.

Military members' medical records must be reviewed because some medical conditions may disqualify people for the Air Force Reserve, Sergeant Murray said.

If the service member qualifies, he or she must decide which option to pursue: Unit or IMA.

The unit option allows servicemembers to select a specific location for assignment. This is a good option for those who know exactly where they want to live, Sergeant Murray said. "The unit option also will allow personnel to be assigned to both Reserve and active-duty bases."

Another benefit of selecting the unit option is that jobs are readily advertised.

However, Sergeant Murray said that being an IMA may allow more flexibility. "Those assigned to a unit often work in a traditional Reserve role, one weekend a month, two weeks a year," she said.

"IMA's don't have that set drill schedule. They work out training and work schedules with their active-duty supervisor. Many units require IMAs to work at least once a quarter.

"The IMA option is designed for those with prior active-duty service under their belts," Sergeant Murray said. "It is a bit more difficult to find a job, as many are not openly advertised."

Another important skill critical to IMAs is administrative know-how due to the lack of administrative support. "You have to file all your own paper work, such as applying for orders, travel vouchers and tracking your training requirements," Sergeant Murray said.

For those with family or active-duty spouses, the IMA option allows for easy moves and flexibility between stations. "For example," she said, "there are IMA positions in Germany, and other overseas locations."

Sergeant Murray encourages those affected by force shaping to contact a Reserve recruiter early. "I noticed a marked increase in personnel interested in applying to the Reserve," she said. "For those interested in the IMA option, the process can take up to two or three months to find a job opening, apply for the position and find out if you are hired."

A major difference that may allow some servicemembers to continue serving on active-duty is an option to volunteer for active-duty assignments worldwide. "Reservists can volunteer to work more than the minimal days required by drill, serving the time on active-duty," she said. "For example a reservist based out of Westover can search the database, view the rank and job requirements for a specific job and then apply for the active-duty orders; you could apply for a job at Langley Air Force Base, Va., and work there on active duty. This is available to both the officer and enlisted corps."

Transferring within the Unit and IMA program is convenient for the member. In the IMA program, the member must simply find another unit to work for by calling the area they are going to be moving to. In the Unit program, the Air Force

Reserve has personnel designed to assist with transfers.

For those who want the traditional reservist route but still want to work in the military environment every day, the Reserve also is home to a number of civilian jobs, the sergeant said.

These jobs are only available to members of the Air Force Reserve, and are designed to maintain continuity within reserve units. A listing of current job opportunities can be found online at www.usajobs.opm.gov.

Resources about employment opportunities, news and resources for employers are available on the web at: www.afrc.af.mil.

AFPC commander to speak on force shaping

By Rudy Purificato
311th Human Systems Wing

Air Force Personnel Center commander Gen. Anthony Przybysławski will discuss future Air Force force shaping at 4 p.m., Feb. 21 at the downtown USO, 320 East Commerce Street.

Sponsored by the Air Force Association the meeting is open to anyone, however, seating is limited, says Capt. Michael Wyatt, 311th Services deputy director who is Brooks City-Base's AFA point of contact. "We encourage all junior officers and military leaders (here) to attend, Captain Wyatt said.

Because seating is limited to 60 people, Brooks personnel who want to attend should contact him at 536-8059 to reserve a seat.

The guest speaker will focus on the personnel structure of the Air Force within the next five years that involves a reduction in junior grade officers.

"It's going to be an important meeting," said Captain Wyatt about General Przybylawski's topic, since force shaping is in the process of being implemented Air Force-wide.

Geneneral Przybylawski, an Air Force Academy graduate, has extensive bomber experience having flown B-52s, B-1s and B-2s. "His comments should be very enlightening," Capt. Wyatt said.

For those planning to attend, the USO downtown is located on the street level of the parking garage between Commerce and Market Streets.



Youth Programs in need of participants

By Elizabeth Castillo

Discovery writer

Located on Sydney Brooks Road, the Youth Programs center is eager to serve its customers with numerous programs and activities aimed at making parents lives easier. However, the number of participants who uti-

lize these programs is diminishing

"We have the programs, the materials, the personnel and the facilities. What we

need are the customers," said Feletia McLaurin, director of Youth Programs.

Extensive efforts of advertising through emails, flyers, marquee postings and presentations made at welcome briefings have yet to bring the kind of response Youth Programs has hoped for.

"I would have not even imagined that our numbers would be this low, as far as participants are concerned," Mrs. McLaurin said. "It seems as though there are fewer people in housing, and if there are fewer people in housing then there are fewer children."

We have the programs, the materials, the personnel and the facilities. What we need are the customers.

Feletia McLaurin Youth Programs Director

Youth Programs events are not limited to dependants of active duty members or members in base housing. The programs offered are available to dependants of contractors, GS employees and reservists when they are on active duty. The

sports program has opened its doors to the extended community outside of Brooks.

According to Mrs. McLaurin, Air Force Instruction states that if in order to field a team, a base must use the general public or local community, they are allowed.

"Since there are so few people in housing or on this base, we

could not have sports if it were not for that AFI," Mrs. McLaurin said.

Youth Programs' services offer a wide range of activities for children of varying ages. The activities are aimed at be-

ing fun and educational while providing children a safe and reliable place to stay while their parents are at work.

Youth Programs also provides a sense of unity and familiarity through community events which are a large part of the program.



Photo by Elizabeth Castillo

A Brooks dependent plays tennis during the Youth Program's after school program. Children are able to play outside or indoors, do homework or work on computers as they wait to be picked up after school.

However, with the depleting numbers and lack of participation, it is feared that Youth Programs will not be around forever. "It's a big concern for the people here at youth programs, that if we're not being utilized, the programs could slowly disappear," Mrs. McLaurin said.



Security forces transformation: More than meets the eye

By Senior Airman J.G. Buzanowski

Air Force Print News

As the Air Force continues to adapt for the future, changes to the security forces career field will affect the total force.

Brig. Gen. Robert Holmes, director of security forces and force protection, calls these transformations a "refocus" on how his people train and fight.

"We're not in the Cold War anymore; we have to alter our mentality and our practices for today's reality," the general said. "Because of the nature of the threat, our Airmen are fighting the global war on terror on the front lines, and we owe it to them to provide training, equipment and resources to be effective."

Essentially security forces Airmen will focus on preparing for their warfighting mission at forward locations, as well as security at a fixed installation, General Holmes said.

As an example, he cited an Air Force Task Force that operated around Balad Air Base, Iraq, for two months last year. The unit patrolled the local towns and found weapons caches as well as individuals who posed a threat to the base.

"Our Airmen are going 'outside the wire' to conduct missions and are proving successful in keeping people safe," General Holmes said. "Not only for the folks stationed at the base, but people who live and work in the local area as well. This is very important in the present war on terror."

Security forces Airmen must learn counter-insurgency techniques and in doing so, they'll operate more effectively in joint operations, said Maj. Gen. Norman Seip, assistant deputy chief of staff for air and space operations.

"We need to be prepared for a full-spectrum of threats against an air field," General Seip said. "That means taking more responsibility for defense of our mission, so our sister services can concentrate on their own tasks. We need to understand how they operate, so we're working closely with the Army to identify

additional ways to train our Airmen."

While security forces will focus more on their warfighting competencies, Air Force leaders are reviewing several options

for installation protection duties, like entry control, at home stations. Plans call for more DoD civilians, greater affiliation with Guard and Reserve and better use of technologies, General Holmes said.

The changes to the security forces career field will present the opportunity for other Airman to participate in installation security. While that doesn't necessarily mean everyone will have a rotation checking identification cards at a gate, it does mean more comprehensive training, awareness and capability to respond and participate, he said.

"Will every Airman be a cop? No. But every Airman will be a

We're not in the Cold War anymore; we have to alter our mentality and our practices for today's reality.

Brig. Gen. Robert Holmes Director of Security Forces and Force Protection

warrior," General Holmes said.
"Every Airman needs to be trained in basic force protection skills and must be prepared to defend an air base and themselves in the event of an attack. This means more than just qualifying with a weapon. We want Airmen to be comfortable with their duty weapon and to develop their shooting skills."

While definitive plans have not been finalized, General

Holmes also said one of the transformation goals is bringing security forces Airmen back in step with standard Air Force 120-day deployments.

"Right now our folks are going out for 179-day rotations," he

said. "Our Airmen need time to reconstitute and train, so it's important to get them in line with the rest of the Air Force. We aim to do just that."

Overall, General Holmes said the

changes would make security forces Airmen more effective and relevant to Air Force needs in the face of the current changing nature of warfare.

"We want to make our Airmen more proficient, and to do that, we need to adapt," General Holmes said. "We're going to change our training, our tactics and our procedures and the Air Force will be better for it."





Civilians encouraged to use AF's liberal fitness policy

By Jennifer Moore

75th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

What if someone offered you \$3,600 a year to take better care of yourself? And what if the only stipulation was a little concentrated effort on your part? Would you balk at the deal? I doubt it.

And yet, that's exactly what you're doing if you're...say for example, a GS-11, step one employee, and you're not taking advantage of the Air Force Materiel Command Civilian Fitness Program Policy.

Under current policy guidelines, AFMC offers full-time appropriated fund AF civilians three hours each week for structured fitness activities in official duty status. It's a pretty generous offer! In fact, it rivals most private sector corporations' fitness policies. Plus, it comes complete with free membership to world-class fitness facilities. The program even extends to part-time employees using a pro-rated formula that corresponds with hours worked per pay period.

The program reinforces an ongoing initiative to make health and fitness a top priority for everyone in AFMC. Furthermore, it represents one of the most valuable intrinsic benefits of working for the Air Force — it's an organization that encourages employees to be well-rounded individuals. Whether providing civilian employees with tuition assistance, fostering family-friendly work schedules, or offering paid physical fitness time, the Air Force wingman concepts of physical, emotional, social and spiritual wellness certainly extend as much to the



Photo by Elizabeth Castillo

Staff Sgt. John Seay of the Health and Wellness Center assists 2nd Lt. Steven Brooks as he works on his upper body. Civilians can also use the HAWC's facilities to exercise and take advantage of the Air Force's liberal fitness program policy.

civilian work force as they do to military members.

What's more, participating in the program is easy. The first thing you need to do is review the official AFMC Civilian Fitness Program guidance. Next, fill out a physical fitness request sheet documenting your intent to follow program guidelines — this form is available as an attachment to the official program memorandum. Take the form to your primary-care physician for a signature certifying that you're fit and able to exercise; then submit the form to your supervisor for approval. You'll also need to maintain a basic exercise diary, which is actually a fit-

ness tool most personal trainers and exercise physiologists recommend to their private clients.

Air Force employees are busy people, and excuses for not exercising always abound; however, the Civilian Fitness Program makes it easier than ever to incorporate a fitness regimen into your life. So, if you're a GS-9, step three, take the Air Force up on its \$3,160 for jumping on a treadmill three times a week or for hitting the weights. You're more likely to feel better, live longer, and capitalize on the best kind of financial deal available — an investment in yourself.

Bush grants pay raise for federal employees

Elizabeth Castillo

Discovery writer

Beginning the first pay period of 2006, federal employees saw a slight increase in their paychecks.

President Bush signed an executive order formally granting an overall average pay increase of 3.1 percent for General Schedule employees.

"Employees should see an increase in paychecks for the 27th of January," said Catherine Nickelberry, human resources specialist at Brooks.

According to govexec.com, the president had initially proposed a 2.3 percent civilian increase, but agreed to a congressional push for pay equality between civilian federal workers and military service members.

The increase was met with some opposition from the White House, which strongly opposed the 3.1 percent raise. The increase would cost almost \$1 billion more than the president's initial proposal. However, Bush approved the increase and was included in the fiscal 2006 Transportation-Treasury appropriations measure signed into law on Nov. 30.

The adjustment includes a 2.1 percent "across the board" increase in basic pay, together with an average one percent adjustment varying by locality. The San Antonio area's locality pay will change from 11.72 to 12.52 percent.

Employees interested in viewing charts with the 2006 pay increase can visit the Office of Personnel Management website at www.opm.gov.





ERIC STEPHENS 311th Human Systems Wing director

ACTION LINE 536-2222

The DIRECTOR'S ACTION LINE is your opportunity to make Brooks a better place to live, work and play.

If you have a suggestion for improvement, a complaint or a problem that you have not been able to resolve through normal complaint channels or the chain of command, call the DIRECTOR'S ACTION LINE, 536-2222.

Only items of general interest will be published, so please leave your name and number for a personal response.

The base agencies listed below can be contacted directly:

Brooks City-Base Security	536-2851	Military Personnel	536-1845
311th Communications Squadron	536-6571	Civilian Personnel	536-3353
311th Mission Support Group —		Military Pay	536-5778
Logistics Division	536-3541	Civilian Pay	536-8370
Safety	536-2111	Inspector General (FWA)	536-2358
BDA Housing Community Maintenance	533-5900	Military Equal Opportunity	536-2584
BDA Housing Community Office	533-5905	EEO Complaints	536-3702
311th Services Division	536-2545	Brooks City-Base AF Project Office	536-3655
59th Medical Squadron (Clinic)	536-4715	Brooks Development Authority	536-5366

Action Line: Main gate and base housing

Q: When will individuals have to begin vide as much notice as possible (anticipate at moving out of base housing to support the building of the hospital?

A: The Brooks Development Authority has not entered into any formal sale or lease of property for construction of the Baptist Hospital, therefore no date is set for when any housing residents will need to move. As soon as the deal is confirmed, the Air Force will start working details with the BDA on necessary actions prior to start of hospital construction. BDA will proleast several months) to all affected housing residents.

Q: What is the actual date the gate will reopen?

A: According to the Brooks Development Authority, the new main gate is scheduled to open in February. The new gate location will be on the east end of Sydney Brooks Drive in the traffic island in front of the AFCEE building.

FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

TROOPS/SPOUSES TO TEACHERS

Feb. 1 — 1 - 3 p.m., Bldg. 537

Meryl Kettler, the state TTT coordinator, will hold a Troops to Teachers briefing. She will discuss the routes to achieving Texas teacher certification, the status of TTT, certification programs available in the area, as well as the eligibility criteria for funding from Troops to Teachers. She will also discuss the new Spouses to Teachers initiative. Anyone interested in becoming a teacher is welcome to attend the seminar.

SPONSOR TRAINING

Feb. 7 — 10 - 11 a.m., Bldg. 537

In accordance with AFI 36-3011, sponsor training is mandatory of all first-time sponsors and those who have not sponsored within the past year. Others are more than welcome to attend. Learn about tools and resources available for sponsors.

START LATE, FINISH RICH

Feb. 8 — 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., Bldg. 537

Have you procrastinated saving or investing money for a rainy day? Do you feel like you're living from pay check to pay check? Do you feel like it's too late to be rich? Then the Family Support Center has a class designed just for you, "Start Late, Finish Rich" by David Bach. This class is a no-fail plan for achieving financial freedom at any age. Whether you're in your 30s, 40s, 50s or beyond, there is still time to turn things around. It's never too late to finish rich; all it takes is the decision to get started.

SEPARATION AND RETIREMENT

Feb. 15 — 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Bldg. 537

This is a mandatory class for active military personnel who are retiring or separating within 120 days. Topics covered are pre-separation, Veterans Benefits, Survivors Benefit Plans, TRICARE, and Financial Planning for Transition. Spouses are encouraged to attend.

AFAS EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM

The Air Force Aid Society Gen. Henry Arnold Education Grant Program has increased to \$2,000 for dependent sons and daughters of Air Force members and spouses of Air Force members. Use of fund is limited to tuition, books and fees, or other direct educational expenses. This program is tailored for Air Force families with college students. Application deadline is March 10. Visit www.afas.org for more information and download an application or pick up your application brochure at the FSC.

AIR FORCE ONESOURCE

The Air Force Onesource program, provided in partnership with Family Support Centers and other agencies, is designed to help active duty members and their family members cope with life's little and not so little issues, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Master's level consultants are available to speak with you, ALL calls will be answered live. The website, www.airforceonesource.com, provides information on numerous items of interest and utilizes a key word search engine. One can access informative articles, helpful tools, and audio tips on hundreds of topics. The toll free number is 1-800-707-5784.

ART AND ESSAY CONTEST

Each year during Military Family Month of November, Armed Services YMCA has its annual art and essay contests, sponsored by GEICO Direct and Lockheed Martin, for children of military families representing the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Reserve/National Guard, and Coast Guard. First and second place winners from each branch receive a U.S. Savings bond. For more details or for applications, visit www.asymca.org or pick up an application at the FSC. All entries must be postmarked by March 17.

To register for a class, call 536-2444





Brooks Annual Awards Banquet

The 2005 Brooks annual awards banquet will be Feb. 2 in the Brooks Club. Barbara Westgate, executive director of the Air Force Materiel Command, will be the guest speaker. Tickets are available at Sidney's.

February is Black History Month

To help celebrate Black History Month in February, there will Bernard P. Randolph Scholarship luncheon Feb. 23 at 11:30 a.m. at the Brooks Club. Scholarship eligibility, as well as a full listing of the month's events, can be found on the AACA website at www.brooks.af.mil/aaca. For information regarding ticket purchase, contact Capt. Demetrius Stewart at 536-6993 or Lt. Damion Byrd at 536-4357.

Life Builders Luncheon

Lilfe Builders is a weekly opportunity at the Base Chapel to nourish both body and soul. A meal is served at noon every Wednesday and a presentation on a specific topic is given by the chaplain. The new year of Life Builders begins Wednesday. For more information or to be added

to the weekly reminder email list, contact Chaplain John Hubbs at 536-3824.

Brooks Clinic offering flu vaccines

The Brooks Clinic is offering flu vaccinations to all military active-duty members, dependants and retirees. Stop by the Brooks Immunizations clinic with valid military identification to request flu vaccination. Flu vaccines will be administered on a first-come, first-serve basis while supplies last.

The information line for the Brooks Clinic has been changed to 536-2875. The main appointment line, 536-1847, has not changed.

Interactive Customer Evaluation

To encourage and simplify customer feedback, the Secretary of Defense's Quality Management Office has developed an Interactive Customer Evaluation system. ICE is a web-based tool capable of collecting feedback on services provided by installations. ICE is simple to access, easy to use and takes just a couple of minutes to complete.

Customers are able to submit online comment cards to rate service providers throughout the installation. Comments can be anonymous or you can request a response. As such, customer service can be improved because managers now have the ability to monitor the satisfaction levels through customer comments. Senior leaders receive cumulative customer service satisfaction statistics by organization from ICE software.

Brooks City-Base customers may provide comments by accessing the Brooks homepage at www.brooks.af.mil, clicking on the ICE icon and selecting an activity to give feedback on.

New commerical travel office

N&N Travel is no longer the commercial travel office, as Alamo Travel Group was awarded the travel contract for 2006. The Brooks phone number remains 536-1800, but the toll free number has changed to 866-532-1147 and the after duty hours number has changed to 866-580-1420.

National Prayer Luncheon

This year's National Prayer Luncheon will be held Feb. 28 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Brooks Club. The guest speaker will be Chaplain Nate Crawford, former Air Force Materiel Command Chaplain. Tickets are \$7 and are on sale now. For more information, contact Staff Sgt.

Jeramey Thomas at 536-3824 or contact your first sergeant.

Mass Casualty Decontamination

The Joint Interagency Civil Support Training Center and the Defense Medical Readiness Training Institute are presenting a mass casualty decontamination course. This course will train participants on both civilian and military approaches to casualty decontamination. The focus is on field and hospital decontamination, incorporating principles of site set-up and triage. There will be hands-on training utilizing personal protective equipment.

The course will take place Feb. 21-24 at Fort Sam Houston. For more information contact Staff Sgt. Christopher Phillips at 221-9231.

Preventive Health Assessment

Active duty members are no longer required to physically make the rounds at the medical treatment facility to accomplish their annual Preventive Health Assessment. Today's technology helps alleviate an unnecessary medical appointment. Just a few clicks and about 16 minutes of your time is all it generally takes to complete your PHA. Brooks Clinic is fortunate enough to have been selected as a test site to deploy this web-based application.

Members will be given a user account and password to access the Air Force Web-based Health Assessments. They have 30 days to conduct the PHA health history questions and interval history. There is no need to contact the MTF to make an appointment for an annual visit — responses to the questions will dictate whether a medical appointment is required. Those requiring an appointment will be contacted by a clinic technician. For more information, contact Tech. Sqt. Angela Criner at 536-3536.

Wing Promotion Ceremony

The Wing Promotion Ceremony will be today at 3 p.m. in the Brooks Club.

Vet Center offers free counseling

The Department of Veterans Affairs Vet Center in San Antonio offers free, confidential counseling sessions to combat veterans and their families. Sexual trauma counseling is also available to veterans who experienced sexual assault or harassment while on active duty. Veterans must have a DD Form 214 as proof of eligibility. Walk-ins are welcome.

For more information, call the Vet Center at 472-4025, visit www.va.gov/rcs or visit the Vet Center at 231 W. Cypress, next to San Antonio College.



Brooks employee earns AF honors

By Elizabeth Castillo Discovery writer

Brooks employees continue to get recognized for their hard work, at the base level and Air Force levels.

Cynthia Fleming, financial management technician for the 311th Human Systems Wing was recognized by the Air Force Materiel Command's Financial Management and Comptroller Annual Awards, receiving the Civilian of the Year Award (GS-10 and below). She also won Brooks' Civilian of the Quarter award.

As a "stellar performer" Ms. Fleming was recognized with the Outstanding Performer Award by the 2005 UCI Inspection team. She was also recognized by Base Command Chief and was awarded a second Chief's Coin for continuous outstanding performance.

"In discussing nominations, we were looking for total person concept and Ms. Fleming is it," said 1st Lt. Mary Kelley, Deputy Financial Services Officer. "I feel she is a great asset



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brandy Bogart Cynthia Fleming (right) receives the Civilian of the Quarter award from Col. Penny Giovanetti, deputy director of the 311th Human Systems Wing. Ms. Fleming was also recognized by the Air Force Materiel Command, winning the Civilian of the Year award.

to our unit because she genuinely cares for our customers."

As a Customer Service Financial Management Technician, Mrs. Fleming possesses "strong analytical abilities" and is the "go to person" for on line payments for members with no pay status or new accessions.

"She knows her military pay from top to bottom," said Linda Lopez, Customer Service Technician. "She's an expert!"

Ms. Fleming's contributions to her job were not the only things that made her a prime candidate for nomination.

Brooks' Courts-Martial and Article 15s

The following is a list of Courts-Martial and Article 15 actions taken at Brooks City-Base from September through December, 2005:

An airman first class from 311th Mission Support Group was sentenced by a General Court-Martial in a sentence rehearing for the wrongful use of marijuana, wrongful distribution of marijuana and cocaine, and introduction of marijuana and cocaine onto Brooks City-Base. Punishment consisted of a Bad Conduct Discharge, reduction to the grade of airman basic, and 10 months confinement.

An airman first class from 311th MSG was found guilty by a Special Court-Martial of two specifications of wrongful use of marijuana. Punishment consisted of forfeiture of \$500 pay per month for two months and reduction to the grade of airman basic.

A senior airman from 311th MSG was found guilty by a Special Court-Martial of wrongful use of methamphetamine. Punishment included a Bad Conduct Discharge and reduction to the grade of airman basic.

A senior airman from the Air Force Institute for Operational Health was found guilty by a Special Court-Martial of wrongful use of methamphetamine. Punishment included forfeiture of \$500 pay per month for six months, reduction

to the grade of airman basic, and six months confinement.

An airman first class from the 68th Information Operations Squadron accepted nonjudicial punishment under Article 15, Uniform Code of Military Justice, for failure to obey a lawful order. Punishment consisted of reduction to the grade of airman, seven days extra duty and a reprimand.

An airman first class from the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine accepted non-judicial punishment under Article 15 for providing alcohol to underage Airmen. Punishment consisted of a suspended reduction to the grade of airman, forfeiture of \$300 pay, seven days extra duty and a reprimand.

An airman basic from USAFSAM accepted nonjudicial punishment under Article 15 for underage drinking. Punishment consisted of forfeiture of \$250 pay, seven days extra duty and a reprimand.

An airman basic from USAFSAM accepted nonjudicial punishment under Article 15 for underage drinking. Punishment consisted of forfeiture of \$175 pay, five days extra duty, and a reprimand.

Submitted by Capt. Rhea Laguna, Brooks Legal Office

"She is an excellent worker, an active member of society and is always seeking opportunities for self improvement," said Lieutenant Kelley. "On top of this, she is a wonderful mother and supportive wife to her active duty

husband.

Ms. Fleming's performance is not only recognized by her supervisors, but her co-workers as well. She has left a lasting impression not only to her customers, but has set a standard of performance for her co-workers.

"She is a very knowledgeable person and can answer any question concerning military pay," said Airman First Class Shelley Hall. "She is a good role model and someone I can look up to."



Brooks offices assist tax filers

Elizabeth Castillo

Discovery writer

As tax season rolls around, important tax information and new services may make the tax process easier and a little less stressful for Brooks personnel.

Active duty and retired military and their dependents are eligible to use the Tax Center. People interested in utilizing the Tax Center should call the Brooks Legal Office at 536-3301 and request a "tax preparation appointment." Appointments last 30 minutes and are available Mondays from 8 to 11 a.m., Tuesdays from 1 to 4 p.m. and Wednesdays from noon to 3 p.m.

In addition to the Tax Center, the Brooks Finance Office is available as a resource.

"Our office will assist with any questions concerning tax information, and filing your taxes can be less stressful," said Cynthia Fleming, financial management technician at the Brooks Finance Office.

The Finance Office hours are 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. To contact a member of the customer service team, contact 536-5778.

Another resource to help manage the filing of tax returns is MYPAY. W-2 documents are available via MYPAY for all active duty members; however members with access to MYPAY will not receive a hardcopy in the mail. Requests for hardcopy W-2s can be made through the servicing finance office.

In addition, MYPAY users are not authorized to change their delivery method through MYPAY during December and January. DFAS will mail hardcopies today.

Some changes were made for those who claim Ohio as their state of legal residence. If personnel claim Ohio as their state of legal residence but claim exemption from state tax withholding while outside of the state of Ohio no longer have that option.

In addition, those members who are claiming exemption from tax withholding must complete a new W-4. If members fail to do so, the military pay system will automatically convert the member's withholding status to single and zero exemptions by Feb 15.

Turbo Tax, and all other Tax filing software are commercial products, and are not Department of Defense products. Therefore any problems with this software must be resolved between the software vendor and the member.

Some helpful reminders to help make this tax season a smooth process is to review Leave and Earnings statements throughout the year for accuracy to avoid possible problems at the end of the year which could require a corrected W-2. Ensure mailing addresses are current on the LES. People needing to make changes to addresses or withholding allowances should use MYPAY. MYPAY pin requests can be made through the servicing finance office.

Brooks youth to read about cultural diversity

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

Cultural diversity and the African American experience is part of an educational outreach reading program planned next month by the Brooks February Observance Committee for African American History Month.

"We've expanded the reading program to include two sessions (each) at the Brooks Child Development Center and Youth Center," said Staff Sergeant Robin Balanciere, committee chairperson, referring to the Feb. 13 and Feb. 27 sessions.

Last year, the first time the readings were held, only one day was devoted to readings conducted by a few volunteers in two sessions, Sergeant Balanciere said.

Annually, Brooks conducts its readings to commemorate African American History Month in conjunction with the National African American Read-In. This year, the national read-in will be held on Feb.6

During 'read-ins,' youngsters ranging in age from two to 10 years old, are exposed to various cultures through literature read aloud by Brooks volunteers. The Brooks Library has provided the books that will be used in the readings.

"When we did the readings last year, we just read books that were already provided to us. The books were not about African American history. This year, we selected specific books from the base library featuring various cultures," Sergeant Balanciere said. In keeping with the cultural diversity theme, age-appropriate reading material presented here this year is not limited to African American history.

"We hope to express both the differences and similarities that exist between various cultures," Sergeant Balanciere noted. She said the program is focused on enhancing literacy by getting children interested in reading.

"We also want it to be a handson experience for the children," she said, explaining that volunteers such as her will act out parts of the books through voice inflections, sound effects and other theatrical techniques. The readings could also feature pairs of readers performing skits based on dialogue contained in the books. "We want the children to learn as well as be entertained," she said.

The half-dozen volunteer readers are from the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine, Air Force Research Laboratory, 68th Information Operations Squadron and the Mission Support Group.



Fourth Quarter Award Winners



Master Sgt. Chester Alexander/ AFIOH SNCO of the Quarter



Capt. Dean Selimon 68th IOS CGO of the Quarter



Staff Sgt. Ricardo Ramos "A" Flight Honor Guard



Dolores Garza Human Systems Group GS 3 through 5



Cynthia Fleming 311th HSW GS 6 through 8



Jorge Gonzalez AFIOH GS 9 through 12



Linda Canas AFIOH GS 12 through 13



Ricardo Hernandez Mission Support Group NAF Technician



Master Sgt. John Yevick 311th HSW Wingman of the Quarter

NOT PICTURED

Staff Sgt. Christopher Hughes USAFSAM NCO of the Quarter Airman 1st Class Justin Sultzbach 68th IOS Airman of the Quarter

Lorenzo Flores Jr. Mission Support Group NAF Manager Dawn East AFCEE Student Aide

Photos by Staff Sgt. Brandy Bogart

Congratulations to all winners



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Photos by Staff. Sgt. Brandy Bogart



SEALS



FULL NAME: Iris W. Seals

DUTY TITLE, ORGANIZATION: Chief, Administrative Communications and Official Mail Manager, 311th Communications Squadron

IN SIMPLE TERMS, WHAT DO YOU DO?:

Serves as the administrative guru responsible for knowing military correspondence formatting, provide training to administrative professionals, and am responsible for processing all government official mail onto and off Brooks City-Base. I am a member of the Alamo Federal Executive Board Shared Neutral Mediator Consortium and a collateral Equal Employment Opportunity counselor.

> BIRTHDAY: May 5, 1945

HOMETOWN:

Born in Houston, but am a military brat and my parents settled in San Antonio

FAMILY STATUS:

Married with three sons, two daughters-in-law, two grandsons, and one granddaughter

PERSONAL MOTTO:

"Unless one can walk in another's shoes or live in their brain, do not judge them."

INSPIRATIONS: God, Jesus, and the Golden Rule

PET PEEVE:

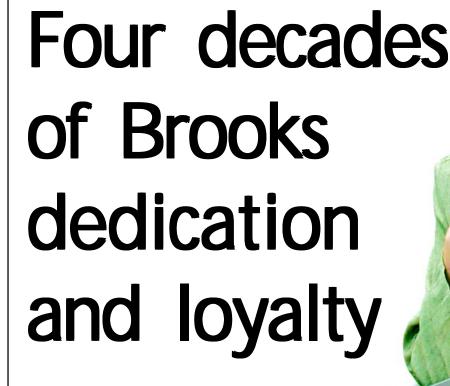
People who speed and constantly change from one lane to another and forget every vehicle does have brakes!

FIVE-YEAR GOAL:

Since I just completed my master's degree, I have taken a break from "goaling" and just enjoying not having to do research, intensive paper writing and reading textbooks. I do hope to teach at a community college, GED students, and/or adult education classes.

ULTIMATE GOAL:

Continue sharing my knowledge, experiences, and skills with others (I really do not see myself as retired) and spend time traveling and visiting the grandchildren



By Kendahl Johnson

Discovery editor

Despite more than 40 years working as a federal employee at Brooks City-Base, Iris Seals refuses to leave. "I have no plans for retirement," she says adamantly, insisting on continuing to display a level of dedication and loyalty not often found by today's employers.

But it isn't just loyalty and dedication that keeps a person working at the same place for four decades. One must also truly enjoy her job — which is the case for Ms. Seals. "Brooks has given me many opportunities; I have really enjoyed it here. They always told me I'd be the one to lock the gate when Brooks closed. Now they are telling me I'll be the one to hand over the keys to the contractors," she said.

Ms. Seals works for the 311th Communications Squadron as the chief of administrative communications and official mail manager. "I am basically the guru for all correspondence." Although it is her current job, it is just one of many she has held at Brooks over the years.

Ms. Seals was born and raised in San Antonio. Her father was active duty Air Force, so they traveled around somewhat, but most of his assignments were in San Antonio. After graduating from Highlands High School, she enrolled in Draughon's Business School at the encouragement of her father. "My father was adamant that I learn a trade and get some work experience, and he highly encouraged civil service."

She came to Brooks Air Force Base in 1965 as a clerk typist for the Aerospace Medical Division. "I got my first paycheck of \$200 and thought I'd hit the jackpot," she remembers. Over time, she worked many different jobs for many different bosses. "Although some of my jobs were abolished and it caused a step backward, it's always led to bigger and better things."

But it wasn't necessarily the variety

of jobs that has kept her here, but all the great people she has worked with over the years. "I've been very fortunate to work with so many wonderful people. And I have seen many folks come and go. I've seen Airmen come back as chief master sergeants and lieutenants come back as generals."

As a veteran employee of the Air Force, Ms. Seals has plenty of advice for young workers and Airmen just starting their careers. "Volunteer. You'll learn something new, you'll benefit your unit and you'll help further the mission. And don't be afraid to ask questions and learn the system." She added that education should be a priority. "Never have too much education, even if you self-educate; you don't need a diploma or college degree to be educated. Read and learn as much as you can. Do the

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even if you self-educate; you

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311th Communications Squadron

very best at whatever job you have."

And Ms. Seals practices what she preaches. Five days before her 60th birthday, she earned a master's degree in

organizational management from the University of Phoenix, graduating with a 3.89 grade point average.

have.

Now that school is behind her, she has more time to spend with her family and her hobbies – reading and playing golf. But not a lot of time. In addition to her official work responsibilities, Ms. Seals is busy rolling up her sleeves and getting involved at Brooks in a variety of things.

She has assumed the role of equipment custodian for her workgroup and is responsible for a budget of \$95,000. She is the interim records manager for the base. She volunteered to act as the chair for national women's history month, celebrated in March. She is an

Information Assurance Awareness representative. And she is a member of the Alamo Federal Executive Board Shared Neutral Mediator Consortium and a collateral Equal Employment Opportunity counselor.

Perhaps most notably, Ms. Seals serves as a certified mediator, where she mediates perceived workplace disputes or contracts. "I was the first person from Brooks selected to attend the Air Force contracted training at the Justice Center of Atlanta. I mediate for all federal agencies in the area. I don't enjoy that there are perceived disputes, but I feel I have the experience and knowledge to help resolve problems and concerns. It almost always comes down to a communication situation of some kind, like a miscommunication or a lack of communication."

In the 40 years at Brooks, she has made many memories, both good and bad. "I worked in Bldg. 150 when astronauts would come the very best at whatever job you through for Iris Seals physicals. I worked when they were devel-

oping space food and they'd come around offer employees samples. I was here when the Chamber fires took the lives of two Airmen. It was truly tragic," she said.

She said she is sad to see BRAC targeting Brooks and will be sad to see it close. And despite the fact that the growth forced her to move - a developer sold the land she was leasing she said the City-Base concept is "fantastic" and has "been a great thing for this side of town."

The growth to the areas surrounding Brooks may have forced her out of her home, but it couldn't make her leave a job she has loved for more than four decades.





Train enthusiast enjoys enviable collection

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

Clarence Theis never loses his 'train of thought,' which for a model railroader is a good thing when trying to keep up with the latest innovations inherent within the hobby. Ever since he got his first train set, this retired Brooks chemist has been on the right track toward building what has become one of the largest model train collections in Texas.

Housed in a 3,200-square-foot building, the 6,000-piece collection includes vintage model trains and accessories of every size, style and era. He also has enough track to circle Loop 1604, should the city want to inaugurate the first miniature commuter light rail line.

"My mother bought me my first train set when I was 12," recalls the 72-yearold Mr. Theis, "It was a steam engine, four cars and a caboose. Every Christmas I'd set it up around the Christmas tree."

Mr. Theis, like so many others from his generation, developed a passion for model trains after being enticed by clever department store exhibits. "I became interested in trains after seeing a model train display at Joske's Department Store at Christmas," Mr. Theis said.

Legendary entertainer Frank Sinatra had a similar experience, detailed in a video documentary that Mr. Theis possesses. The young Sinatra was hooked on model train collecting after seeing elaborate Christmas window displays at Macy's in New York City. Sinatra's mother pawned her fur stole to buy young Frank his first train set, explained Mr. Theis. It led to one of the

largest model train collections in America, preserved today at the late singer's Palm Springs, Calif. home by the estate's current owner - multimillionaire Canadian businessman Jim Patterson.

Pauline Theis didn't hock a thing to buy her only child his first train. She also never missed an opportunity to add to her son's collection every Christmas.

"I dug a whole septic tank (system) to make enough money to buy a (model train) operating crane," said Mr. Theis about his boyhood chores living on a farm in San Antonio. His work ethic has since paid off, much like that of his maternal great grandfather Rudolph Keilman who profited from the sale of land to the Army that created Brooks

Born during the golden age of Lionel trains, Theis primarily collects the "O" gauge models made popular by the New York City-based company founded in 1901 by Joshua Lionel Cowen. "They're one-quarter scale of the original," said Mr. Theis, referring to "O" gauge that Lionel began producing in 1915 to stay competitive with other manufacturers.

"Before World War II, people had big houses and big model trains," says Theis about the large standard gauge train

sets. He started his collection in earnest after the war. At the time, he could buy inexpensive model train cars for \$10 apiece. Those same cars today fetch \$50 each.

It was during the 1950s, when Theis took a hiatus from collecting to graduate from college and serve in the Army, that a shift among collectors to the smaller,

more detailed HO gauge occurred.
Today, HO gauge is the most popular among collectors.

To Mr. Theis, any gauge is acceptable within his ever-growing collection that is augmented by model planes and classic automobiles. After re-starting his model train collection during the 1980s while working for the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine, he has since



Photos by Rudy Purificato

Clarence Theis holds a reproduction Blue Comet passenger car that features a removable roof. This 1930s Lionel replica is intricately detailed down to the passenger seats and restrooms.

made innumerable acquisitions featuring the latest technology.

Back when he was a kid, however, model train special effects were quite limited. "There was no sound except for a whistle," he said, referring to Lionel innovator Charles Gioirro's invention of the first model train whistle in 1935. Referring to model train visual effects,

I became interested in trains after seeing a model train display at Joske's Department Store at Christmas.

Clarence Theis
Retired Brooks chemist

Mr. Theis confessed, "All we had were smoke pellets dropped into the smoke stack."

Model trains became technologically sophisticated after 1980 when Mike Wolf founded Lionel's chief competitor - Mike's Train House in Columbia, Md. "Wolf introduced the first computerized trains," Mr. Theis said. Imbedded within locomotives and accessories are computer chips that accurately mimic a variety of railroad sounds, including steam engines' hissing noise. This technology also produces sounds indigenous to the railroad industry: air line and air hoses breaking, diesel engines cranking up, radio traffic and even train station chatter from workers and rail passengers.

Pushing a button on a replica 1950s era Sinclair Oil gas station, Mr. Theis demonstrates how computer technology works in model train accessories. A miniature car emerges from the garage, crosses over station air hoses producing an authentic 'ding ding' alarm, followed by the clanging sound of a gas pump fueling. At Mel's Diner, a miniature car hop on roller skates states over an intercom, "Your bill for a burger and float is a buck and a half."

As cool as these and many of his other accessories are, Mr. Theis treasures Lionel's reproduction of the 1930s standard gauge Blue Comet passenger train set. Named after celestial comets, an original set is a priceless find. "The original Comet set costs

\$8,000-\$9,000. They're rare because many of them were donated during World War II metal drives," Mr. Theis said. Even reproductions are costly at \$3,000 to \$4,000.

Mr. Theis is among a devoted group of railroad model hobbyists, the majority of who belong to the 30,000-member Train Collectors Association. TCA plans to hold for the first time in San Antonio its national convention in June.

Model train collecting's allure, however, has lost its appeal among younger generations. "The popularity of model train collecting has decreased over the past 20 years," he said. The decline started in the 1950s when children became interested in model race cars.

As for his enduring interest, Mr. Theis quotes renowned collector and former Disney animator Ward Kimble, who said, "He who dies with the most trains, wins."



Clarence Theis became interested in model trains after seeing a display at a department store. He now has one of the largest model train collections in Texas.



A LOOK at BROOKS

What do you like most about the Super Bowl?



Marshall Harris AFCEE

It's a combination of competition and a long journey traveled; from individual training, through preseason, to the regular season and then the playoffs.



Lt. Col. Vincent Fonseca Air Force Ready Reserve

It makes the rest of the city less crowded.



Airman 1st Class Joseph Kemper USAFSAM

I just really love football, neither one of the teams are my favorite, but I just love to watch the game.



Airman 1st Class Abby Porter 59th Medical Squadron

I don't usually watch it, but if I did the only reason I would is to watch the commercials because that is when they are the best.



Tech. Sgt. Craig Johnson 59th Medical Squadron

I get to see Jerome Bettis play in the Super Bowl before he retires next year. And in his hometown of Detroit.

Xylitol helps prevent cavities

By Erla Naumann

Preventative Dentistry Officer

February is National Children's Dental Health Month, so it's a good time to be conscious of helpful oral hygiene practices. With a product called xylitol, people who enjoy chewing gum or having a mint in their mouth can do so without the worry of developing tooth decay.

Xylitol is a natural sweetener derived from ruits and vegetables such as yellow plums, strawberries and raspberries. It is usually made from certain hardwoods such as the birch tree.

Xylitol blocks bacteria from producing the acids that cause tooth decay, decreases the level of cavity-causing bacteria, decreases plaque formation and enhances hardening of weakened teeth. Products that contain xylitol are especially important for those not able to brush regularly or who eat meals with high amounts of carbohydrates.

Xylitol-sweetened mints can be used by people who can't or prefer not to chew gum. It relieves "dry mouth" by increasing the flow of saliva and is safe for the whole family since it has 40 percent less calories than sugar.

When looking for such a product, read the label; it should be the first ingredient listed on the label before other sweeteners.





Things to do around Brooks
Janice McMahon, 536-5475

CASINO NIGHT

Casino Night will be Feb. 16 in the Brooks Club. A \$10 package includes a Mexican Buffet and entertainment. The buffet will be served from 6 to 7 p.m. and games will be from 6 to 9 p.m. Each guest will receive an arm band for entrance to the buffet and event plus a chip to be turned in to the dealers to receive \$2,500 in chips.

Games will include roulette, craps, blackjack and a Texas Hold "Em table. At the end of the evening chips will be exchanged for tickets and guests will be eligible for a variety of door prizes that will include a TV, DVD player, camera, gift cards and more. Contact Pete Peters or Cindy Floyd at 536-3782 or Letty Martinez at 536-3444 for more information on the event.

STOCK SHOW AND RODEO

The San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo has arranged two military days for this year's stock show and rodeo. Military personnel will receive free admission to the grounds with their military ID card Feb. 10 and Feb. 17. Normal admission is \$5. Stop by the Base Library, Bldg. 705, and register for a chance to win free admission to the grounds, the rodeo and concerts, or carnival rides. A drawing will be held Jan. 31 where 10 lucky people will win two rodeo tickets plus a ticket good for \$20 worth of ride tickets.

Two lucky people will also win a packet with two free adult/child

grounds admission or three free adult/child grounds admission valid February 3-19. Big and Rich play in concert on Feb. 10 and Willie Nelson performs on Feb. 17. These two days are also carnival dollar days, with \$1 sodas, hot dogs and popcorn.

CUP-A-JOE COFFEE

Coming soon! Cup-A-Joe Coffee House will open in the near future at Sidney's. We will proudly brew Starbucks coffee. The entire area is being renovated and will feature a WWII theme. Watch for the Grand Opening announcement!

VALENTINE'S DANCE

A Valentine's Dance will be held Feb. 17 in the Youth Center (Bldg. 470). The dance will be 6:30 to 9 p.m. and children five and up are welcome to attend. Admission is \$5 and will include music, food and refreshments. All guests are encouraged to "dress to impress" for the event.

BASEBALL REGISTRATION

Baseball registration begins Feb. 1 and will continue until all teams are full. Children from ages 5-18 years old are welcome to participate at their level of experience. T-Ball will be available for 5 year olds. Those interested can sign up at the Teen Center or Youth Center.

SPRING BREAK CAMP

Registration for Spring Break Camp begins Feb 1 for children 5-12 years old. Camp hours are from 6:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 13-17. Daytime activities include breakfast and a snack served in the Youth Center, lunch at Sydney's, outdoor play, computer use, cooking projects and leisure time.

GIVE PARENTS A BREAK

Give Parents a Break is held every second Friday and is free for all with a certificate who meet the specified criteria. The next Give Parents a Break will be held Feb 10.

NSPS delays

from page 1

streamline cumbersome personnel rules and make it easier for managers to both reward stellar performance and correct sub-par performance among the Defense Department's 650,000 civil-service employees.

The system also includes a means to rate leaders on management functions.

"DoD is committed to making the NSPS transition as smooth as possible for the workforce. Ensuring that we 'take the time to do this right' has always been a principle in our event-driven implementation approach," officials said on the program's Web site. "We want to make sure that our employees, supervisors, and leaders fully understand this system, and that they have the tools to succeed in a results-focused, performance-based environment."

Brooks employees and supervisors who want more information about NSPS should access the NSPS link on the Brooks homepage. The link will take employees to links for the DoD and the U.S. Air Force NSPS home pages. For questions on how to access the courses, contact Staff Sgt. Troy Rude at 536-3732. Employees with general NSPS questions can submit an e-mail to NSPS@brooks.af.mil.

Ed Shannon, 311 HSW/PA, contributed to this story

Instructions for accessing NSPS computer-based training courses via the Air Force Portal:

- 1. Log into the AF portal: https://www.my.af.mil
- 2. If you do not have a user name and password you will need to create one. Go to the Register Now box and select "Register without CAC" $\,$
- 3. Once you have your user name and password, login and ensure that you are on the AF Home tab page.
- 4. From the "Top Viewed Items" area, select "IT E-Learning"
- 5. Once you select "IT E-Learning" the SkillPort page will appear. Using the "Search for" text box you can search for any courses you wish.
- 6. If you wish you can change the category drop down to "Courses" to speed up your search.





Defender's Cup must wait for Brooks soccer team

By Rudy Purificato
311th Human Systems Wing

An aging but determined Brooks soccer squad came to grips with a few 'senior moments' in their quest for respectability against younger teams during Lackland Air Force Base's Fourth Annual Defender's Cup Soccer Tournament held Jan.13-15.

After a year hiatus from the tournament, the Brooks team of lunchtime players performed admirably against great odds, punctuated by the inevitable appearance of Father Time.

"We knew we were in trouble when we had to play our third game on Saturday at 10 p.m. We had no substitutes (on the bench), no stamina and we were tired," said Brooks coach Brian Mills. The Air Force Research Laboratory captain, however, is proud of his team's performance during the 14-team, double elimination tournament in which the average age of their opponents was 28. "We were the oldest team in the tournament with an average age of 36," he said.

Nevertheless, the Brooks squad relied on the experience of its 18-member roster to post an overall 2-3 tournament record. Two years ago when

the squad was a tad more youthful, the team finished the tourney with a 3-2-1 record.

Playing in this tournament for them is a remarkable feat. There is no varsity or intramural soccer program here. Brooks players, who volunteer to represent the base in the Lackland tourney, primarily play simulated games for practice throughout the year at lunch.

Initially hyped, but harboring no great expectations, Brooks beat Hurlburt Field 2-1 in the opening game of the preliminary round. AFRL striker Jake Stolarski, the team's offensive star, scored both goals.

Lackland AFB, however, handed Brooks its only preliminary round loss, defeating them 3-1. "We had so many opportunities to score on an open net, but didn't," Mills said. Brooks striker Luis Perez tied the game at 1-1 in the first half, but the team surrendered two unanswered goals in the second half.

"Our proudest moment came when we beat Keesler 2-0," said the coach, referring to his beatup squad winning the game despite showing signs of fatigue.

Langley AFB eliminated Brooks from the tournament the next morning with a convincing 4-0 victory. "I'm proud of our guys. They could have given up, but they didn't," the coach said.

Brooks downs Dyess twice in hoop showdown

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

Led by their two top scorers and bolstered by a greatly improved defense, the Brooks men's varsity basketball team defeated Dyess AFB twice during a series at home Saturday and Sunday.

The twin killing improved the team's Southwest Military Basketball League record to 6-8. More importantly, it was the first time in more than a decade that Brooks had won a home series. Earlier this year, Brooks won back-to-back games for the first time in three seasons.

"We've turned a corner with six games left in the season," said Brooks head coach Damion Byrd. He explained the biggest difference in the squad's improvement is the players having learned how to win games. "We've learned how to close out games," he said, adding that the defense has kept the team in games.

That was most apparent in the second game against Dyess. While Brooks scoring star Roderick Bryant's 33 points had given the team the lead throughout the game, it was the team's defense and dominance on the boards that saved the day.

"We were leading the whole game, and then got a bit a sloppy (on offense). They (Dyess) came back and tied it at 67-67



Photo by Rudy Purificato

Brooks guard Roderick Bryant scores two of his 19 points against Dyess Air Force Base in the first of a two-game home series. Bryant led Brooks to two victories, notching a combined 52 points in the games.

with 20 seconds left in regulation," Coach Byrd said. In the past, Brooks usually wilted under the pressure of having given up a lead in the final period. Not this time. They capitalized on their opponent's mistake of trying to win the game on a 'length of the court pass' that went out of bounds. "We in-bounded the

ball to our center James Gregory who scored with one second left on the clock," Coach Byrd said.

Having split an earlier season series on the road against Dyess, Brooks wasn't about to roll over for their opponent, a contender that had an 8-4 record and was in second place in the league going into the series here.

In the first game, Brooks shook off apparent lethargy midway through the first half. Taking a 40-35 halftime lead into the second half, Brooks picked up the pace while also forcing many turnovers. They also dominated both ends of the boards, getting two or three shots each possession. Brooks guard Wilman Dean led the way to an 84-73 victory with a gamehigh 30 points.

"Our stars are (now) being stars," observes Coach Byrd about the team's leading scorer, Dean from the 68th Information Operations Squadron, and Bryant from the Mission Support Group. The lightning quick Dean has emerged as both a star of the team and the league. His performance, in tandem with Bryant, has supercharged the team's offense that is also bolstered by a strong bench.

"We're trying to move up in the standings," the coach said, adding that the team's 9-14 overall record is not indicative of how well they have played during the second half of the season.

Brooks plays its last home series against Fort Sam Houston Feb.4-5, before finishing the season on the road in early March against Fort Sam and Laughlin AFB. The postseason championship tournament begins March 29 at Randolph AFB.

Brooks youth begin play in 'drug-free' hoop league

By Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

Twelve Brooks youth basketball teams began play Jan.14 in the Pizza Hut-San Antonio Spurs drug-free basketball league, sponsored by the Kids Sports Network. The goal is for the league to repeat the success it had during last year's season. For in this league, winning is not as important as learning to play the game and developing lasting friendships.

"We teach team work and don't emphasize winning. They are all winners. There are no losers," said Brooks Youth Sports director Ron Hayes. While he and an army of volunteer coaches and parents are pleased with the progress made by Brooks youth teams last season, the purpose of this league is to promote sportsmanship, education and good behavior.

"At the beginning of every game, players, coaches and parents recite a pledge to be drug, alcohol and tobacco free," says Mr. Hayes. He explained that league rules are supported by a curriculum that requires coaches to present weekly drug education classes to players while emphasizing the need to stay in school.

"We took a survey and found out the number one reason why kids participate in the league is to be with their friends. The second reason was to develop their athletic skills," Mr. Hayes said.

Peer pressure to do the right thing in terms of behavior is at the core of this league that Brooks youth have participated in for years. Teams range in age from 5-17 and are often coed. They play full-court basketball, but for the younger ones the goals are lowered to eight feet and there are six-minute peri-

ods. The action is non-stop as players' exuberance and desire to play well and not disappoint their teammates overrides any shyness or limited athletic ability. The defending 2005 champion Brooks 15-17 year-

old boys

team won

its opening

season

The Brooks Eagles (in white)
7-8 year old team dominated
the Fort Sam Houston
Generals in the team's
season opener at the Brooks
Fitness Center Jan. 21.
(Photo by Rudy Purificato)

game on the road against Randolph AFB with a last second shot, while the last game of a four-game home opener Jan.

21 here produced a dominant performance by the Brooks Eagles 7-8 year-old co-ed team that handily won its first season game.

"We finished with a 12-3

"We finished with a 12-3 record last year," says fourth-year coach Danny Campos about the Brooks Eagles team that beat the Fort Sam Houston Generals.

Despite the league's de-

Despite the league's deemphasis on winning, Brooks youth teams nevertheless made history in 2005. Three Brooks youth basketball teams accomplished a historic first by simultaneously winning postseason championships.

The Brooks Eagles boys team #3 won the Fort Sam Houston Boys Basketball Tournament, the Brooks 13-14 girls squad captured the Randolph AFB Girls Basketball Tourna-

ment and the Brooks 15-17 year-old boys team won the Brooks Youth Sports Boys Basketball Tournament.